

VZCZCXYZ0020
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHJB #0176 0721554
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 131554Z MAR 07
FM AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0122
INFO RUEHXR/RWANDA COLLECTIVE
RHMFIUU/CDR USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE
RUEKJCS/DIA WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC

UNCLAS BUJUMBURA 000176

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF/C

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [PREL](#) [BY](#)
SUBJECT: BURUNDI'S FORMER 2ND VICE PRESIDENT ARRESTED

REF: BUJUMBURA 81

[1](#)1. (U) Summary: Burundi's National Security Services (SNR) arrested former Vice President Marina Barampama on March 13 on charges of being a "threat to the internal security of the state". The charges are likely related to the import of building materials, which many believe are for her personal use. President Nkurunziza dismissed Barampama, a staunch supporter of the deposed ruling party head, Hussein Radjabu, on February 9. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (U) Burundi's National Security Services (SNR) arrested former Vice President Marina Barampama at her residence for security violations related to the importation of goods from China. The arrest warrant accused Barampama as being a threat to the internal security of state and other,. The other, was not described in detail in the warrant. It is believed that she is being held at the central prison in Bujumbura.

[1](#)3. (U) The security violation pertains to a shipment of building materials that arrived in Bujumbura in the name of the Office of the Second Vice President. Imports for official government purposes are exempt from customs duty costs. The building materials in question include iron, steel, and glass, totaling approximately \$150,000.

[1](#)4. (U) Many have speculated that much of the building materials is intended for use at her personal residence. Barampama reportedly sent her warehouse manager to China to purchase the materials prior to her removal from office on February 9. However, the goods arrived in Burundi only last week and, upon checking the name of the recipient, piqued the interest of customs officials.

[1](#)5. (U) President Nkurunziza removed Barampama from office due to insubordination and irresponsibility,. Most notably, Barampama, a key supporter of former CNDD-FDD party president, Hussein Radjabu, had attempted to call a meeting of socio-economic ministers who report to her in an effort to stem the attendance of the party Congress held in Ngozi on February 7. The Ngozi Congress resulted in the removal of Radjabu as the head of the ruling party, CNDD-FDD.

[1](#)6. (SBU) Comment. Barampama's incarceration may be a signal to Radjabu and his allies that no one is above the law and appropriate action will be taken to combat public corruption. Her arrest comes on the heels of her press communication on a public web-site, in which she challenged President Nkurunziza's decision and the legality of her removal as the Second Vice President. End Comment.
MOLLER